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Lentil Bolognaise

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Ingredients

2 onions

2 sticks of celery 3 small carrots 2 cloves of garlic 100g chestnut mushrooms 1-2

tablespoons of olive oil 2 tablespoons of tomato puree A splash of Worcestershire sauce A

few sprigs of fresh thyme 400g can of chopped tomatoes 150g dried green lentils 700ml

vegetable stock Salt and freshly milled black pepper Wholewheat spaghetti A few sprigs of

fresh basil Fresh parmesan cheese

Preparation

1 1.

2 First prepare the vegetables. Peel the onions and finely chop them, along with the celery. Peel and roughly grate the carrot. Peel the garlic then wipe and finely chop the mushrooms. 2.

3 Heat the oil in a large saucepan and gently sweat the chopped onion, celery and carrot for 5 minutes to soften them. 3.

4 Add the mushrooms and the crushed garlic, the tomato puree, Worcestershire sauce and the thyme leaves, stir and cook for another minute or two. 4.

5 Stir in the chopped tomatoes. Thoroughly wash the green lentils under cold running water then add them to the pan. Pour in the hot stock and stir well together. Bring to the boil then simmer gently, stirring occasionally, for 25-30 minutes, or until the lentils are cooked. 5.

6 Meanwhile, cook the spaghetti according to the instructions on the packet, to be ready at the same time as the bolognaise sauce. 6.

7 Season the sauce to taste with salt and black pepper. Serve it on top of spaghetti, garnished with chopped basil leaves and lots of freshly grated parmesan cheese.

8 **Variations:** •

9 This recipe can be made with red lentils instead of green ones if you prefer. •

10 Fresh or dried oregano or marjoram can be used instead of thyme. •

11 Remember to serve vegetarian parmesan cheese if cooking for vegetarians. •

12 You can, of course, serve this sauce with any type of pasta. Or, for a change, serve it spooned over jacket potatoes, with a crisp green salad on the side.

Cooks Note

Using lentils to replace red meat in a bolognaise sauce, served with wholewheat spaghetti, is a great way to make a quick, healthy and nutritious family meal, and there's no need to compromise on flavour, it can still be very tasty indeed! Makes 4 generous portions.